

**REMARKS**

Claims 2, 4, 7 and 12 are pending in this application.

By this Amendment, new claim 12 is added to incorporate the subject matter recited in claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8-11. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8-11 are canceled. Claims 2, 3, and 7 are amended to depend from claim 12. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action acknowledges receipt of Applicant's Preliminary Amendment. However, the Preliminary Amendment was filed with the application on November 15, 2001, instead of January 7, 2002, as indicated in the Office Action. Clarification regarding the filing date of the Preliminary Amendment is respectfully requested.

The Office Action fails to acknowledge receipt of the Claim for Foreign Priority and the Certified Copy of the Priority Document. Applicants respectfully submit that a foreign priority is claimed in the Declaration filed on November 15, 2001, with a Certified Copy of the Priority Document. Explicit acknowledgement of the receipt of the Claim for Foreign Priority and the Certified Copy of the Priority Document is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4 and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,447,465 to Samsel et al. This rejection is moot with respect to the canceled claims 1, 3, 6 and 8 and is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 2, 4 and 7, and claim 12, where applicable.

The Office Action asserts that Samsel discloses all elements recited in claims 1-4 and 6-8. However, Applicants respectfully submit that Samsel does not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12.

As a preliminary matter, Samsel is directed to a deburring and chamfering process for needle blanks. See col. 2, lines 36-46. The burrs of the needle blanks to be deburred and the sharp corners of the needle blanks to be chamfered are parts of the needle blanks. Samsel does not disclose or suggest removing residual fine foreign matters adhered to the needle blanks. Therefore, Samsel does not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12.

Samsel discloses using a medium having a hardness less than or equal to that of the needle blanks. See col. 3, lines 11-26 and col. 4, lines 29-44. Samsel does not disclose a medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters adhered to the needle blanks, because, as discussed above, Samsel does not disclose residual fine foreign matters. Therefore, Samsel does not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12.

Samsel discloses a rinsing process using hot tap water. See col. 5, lines 20-24. Such a rinsing process using hot tap water is not a high precision water washing process. As is known, in a high precision water washing process, the needle blanks would be dipped in water and applied with ultrasonic waves while being swung. (See the specification at, for example, paragraph [0005]). Therefore, Samsel does not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12.

For at least the above reasons, Samsel does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 12, and claims 2-4 and 7, depending therefrom. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-4 and 6-8, and claim 12, where applicable, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 5 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Samsel in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,751,861 to Frost et al. This rejection is moot with respect to the canceled claims 5 and 9-11, and is respectfully traversed with respect to claim 12, if applicable.

The Office Action admits that Samsel does not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing workpiece. However, the Office Action asserts that Frost discloses a barrel finishing process for rolling bearings. Applicants respectfully submit that Samsel and Frost, individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12.

Frost discloses a method wherein bearings may be refurbished without a complete disassembly thereof. See col. 2, lines 6-15. Nowhere does Frost disclose or suggest a rolling bearing comprising parts made by a process of removing residual fine foreign matters with a grinding medium having a lower hardness than that of the residual fine foreign matters prior to a high precision water washing process, as recited in claim 12. Therefore, Frost does not supply the subject matter outlined above as lacking in Samsel. Thus, Samsel and Frost, individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 12. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 9-11, and claim 12, if applicable, is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 2, 4, 7 and 12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff  
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo  
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:GL/sqb

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC**  
**P.O. Box 19928**  
**Alexandria, Virginia 22320**  
**Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

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